In the Claims:

1. (Amended) A nucleic acid construct for suppressing expression of a target gene, comprising:

an antisense nucleic acid sequence directed to a target gene of interest;

an unmodified, naturally occurring 5' U snRNA stem loop structure 5' of said antisense nucleic acid sequence [stem loop structure];

a pol II promoter region 5' of said antisense [region] nucleic acid sequence; and

3' of said antisense region [an unmodified,] a naturally occurring 3' U snRNA stem loop structure,

wherein said expression of said target gene is suppressed by at least 75% of the normal level of expression .

3. (Reiterated) The nucleic acid construct of claim 1, wherein the U snRNA is U1.

5. (Reiterated) The nucleic acid construct of claim 1, wherein the promoter is a U1 snRNA promoter.

6. (Reiterated) The nucleic acid construct of claim 1, wherein the promoter is a constitutive promoter.

7. (Reiterated) The nucleic acid construct of claim 1, wherein the promoter is an inducible promoter.

8. (Amended) The nucleic acid construct of claim 1, further comprising a ribozyme nucleic acid which specifically cleaves mRNA transcribed from said target gene .

9. (Reiterated) The nucleic acid construct of claim 8, wherein the ribozyme nucleic acid is located between the 5' and 3' loop structures.

10. (Reiterated) The nucleic acid construct of claim 8, wherein the ribozyme nucleic acid is a hammerhead-type ribozyme.

11. (Reiterated) The nucleic acid construct of claim 8, wherein a consensus sequence for ribozyme cleavage in a target nucleic acid is 5'-GUC-3' or 5'-GUA-3'.

12. (Amended) The nucleic acid construct of claim 1, wherein the antisense nucleic acid is targeted to a region of a gene [is] selected from the group consisting of rent-1, HPV E6, HIV, hyaluronic acid synthase, and fibrillin.

13. (Amended) A method for suppression of gene expression comprising administering to a cell [a suppressive-effective amount of] the nucleic acid construct of claim 1.

15. (Reiterated) The method of claim 13, wherein the administering is *in vitro*.

17. (Reiterated) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

administering a second nucleic acid encoding a wild-type polypeptide corresponding to the gene product of the gene being suppressed, wherein the second nucleic acid is resistant to ribozyme cleavage and/or antisense inhibition.

20. (Reiterated) The nucleic acid construct of claim 1, further comprising a 5' trimethylguanosine cap.

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5-13, 17 and 20 are pending. Claims 1, 8, 12, and 13 are amended. Support for the amending language of claim 8 can be found in the specification on page 10, lines 3-10.